

## Community Spotlight BRISTOL

**Bristol is a vibrant small town in eastern Addison County.** Nestled at the foot of the Green Mountains, active farms and forests surround historic Bristol Village, the heart of the town, with shops, services, and neighborhoods all within walking distance. Over the past several years the town has been struggling to pass a new town plan that balances economic development and maintaining the character of the community. With partial funding from a state Municipal Planning Grant, Smart Growth Vermont continues to work with the Planning Commission as they redraft their Town Plan and update their zoning districts and standards to ensure that new growth enhances the village and supports the rural economy.

"Our board has the unique privilege of representing the full spectrum of political views that make up our diverse town and of having a very 'hands-on' approach," said Planning Commission Chair Tom Wells, a local commercial property owner and a land use lawyer. "The fact that we are able to struggle through our various views with civility and some degree of efficiency is a direct result of the excellent help of Smart Growth Vermont and in particular Noelle MacKay."



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# GUS SEELIG



## AWARDED THE 2010 ARTHUR GIBB AWARD FOR INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP

Each year, Smart Growth Vermont honors Arthur Gibb's legacy of commitment to safeguarding Vermont's values and unique landscape by presenting an award in his name to an individual whose leadership, vision and courage has brought about positive and lasting change in the way their community or our state integrates growth with conservation. The Gallery of the T.W. Wood Art Center provided a unique backdrop to this year's awards ceremony, where over 140 people, including representatives from all three of our congressional delegations, came to honor Gus Seelig.

"You have embraced the principles of smart growth and mirrored the leadership traits of Art Gibb," wrote Congressman Peter Welch. "Your skill and perseverance in forging a consensus on conservation and housing issues and your devotion to maintaining our sense of heritage and history will benefit Vermont for generations to come."

Senator Bernie Sanders' greeting cited Gus' successful implementation, "sometimes in face of significant opposition – of a unique in

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**Want to make a lasting gift to Vermont's communities?**

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You'll love our e-newsletter. Each month, we send a free, easy to read, informational email and periodic legislative alerts during the session on key issues in Montpelier. If you don't already get our e-news and want to sign up, either send an email to [info@smartgrowthvermont.org](mailto:info@smartgrowthvermont.org) or click on the link on our home page.



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# LEADERSHIP TRANSFERS

2010



## John Ewing, *Founder*



Our original idea for the organization was to find common ground on the issue of strengthening our communities and protecting our working landscape. It was, and continues to be, my belief that Vermonters of different persuasions are devoted to the values that make Vermont so special, but have difficulty coming together because of the political environment. We worked to bring together business people, environmentalists and citizens to help identify the issues that were creating sprawl which was eroding the traditional development patterns of compact villages and towns surrounded by farms, forests and natural areas.

We worked with many groups to successfully put the Downtown and Growth Centers programs into place, and continue to support these ideas at the state level each year by continuing to ensure financial incentives for responsible growth. We put this work into practice on the ground in communities with our Community Planning Partnership, where we work each year with several towns, as we also provide training and our Toolbox to many more.

I am encouraged not only by the excellent work provided by our staff, but also by the sense that in communities across the state there is a strong recognition of the need to plan carefully for the future in a way that preserves the best of Vermont.

After 12 years as Chair, I am delighted to transfer the office to Robin Scheu, who has a long history of non-profit leadership. Being very proud of Smart Growth Vermont, its staff, and its vital work, I look forward to a continued active role on the board and as an advisor to the organization.



## Robin Scheu

John Ewing's vision for this organization has had a great impact across Vermont. Thanks in large part to John, Smart Growth Vermont is in a strong position to make even more progress in assisting communities with planning for and managing land use and development. Smart Growth Vermont focuses its work at both the state and local levels, which allows the organization to not only put theory into practice, but also to take what is learned at the local level to help guide state policy. This unique combination of activities results in a deeper understanding of what works and what needs to be done to maintain healthy, vibrant, and sustainable communities.

To do this work well requires time and resources. This work is urgent: once we have created sprawl, it is nearly impossible to take it back. And the need is now.

In the current economic environment, funding becomes even more of a challenge for nonprofit organizations. It doesn't just take a village to ensure responsible growth; it takes a state. We need everyone's support to achieve our goals. We hope you will help us be part of the solution. Invest in Smart Growth Vermont.





# I VOLUNTEER FOR SMART GROWTH VERMONT BECAUSE



**Sharon Lea,**  
**Burlington**

"... working with Smart Growth Vermont allows me to make a small contribution to the preservation of our farms and cities. I came to Vermont because I was drawn to its beauty – the open farm land, the quaint villages and the small town feel. As a resident, my goal is to help in any way I can to preserve the beauty of this state I fell in love with so many years ago."



**Loren Scott,**  
**Huntington**

"... I believe it is important to be actively involved in my community. The work Smart Growth Vermont does helps to build, bring together and encourage communities in sustainable ways. This is of great importance to me."



**Christina Reiter**  
**Burlington**

"... I cannot think of an organization that does more important work. Thoughtful development can impact every aspect of our lives particularly our health, environment, and community stability. I am excited to be a (small!) part of Smart Growth's efforts to improve the livability of our communities."



## Gus Seelig Awarded the 2010 Arthur Gibb Award for Individual Leadership

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the nation approach to creating affordable housing, conserving agricultural and recreational lands and promoting historic preservation. The results have been impressive. VHCB has supported tens of millions of dollars of public reinvestments in towns and village centers and downtown neighborhoods, funded almost 10,000 units of permanently affordable housing, and conserved over 370,000 acres of farmland, wildlife habitat and recreational areas."

"Under your leadership," wrote Senator Patrick Leahy, "the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board has led the discussion, implemented policy and carried out actions to make Vermont a better place to live."

*"By its very nature, VHCB demands the forging of consensus and the building of bridges... The result is that we have local housing non-profits working with conservation groups and both understanding each other's needs and viewpoints...Gus believes strongly that rising waters gather all boats so if his partners get recognition so will everyone else. This recognition is then 'shared' with all of us engaged in the goals and work of VHCB and groups such as Smart Growth Vermont"*

— Chris Hart, Brattleboro Housing Authority

## RISING to the CHALLENGE

**Want to maximize your investment in Smart Growth Vermont? Help us meet our Membership Challenge.**

A generous donor has offered to match all new and increased membership gifts between now and the end of the year. By increasing your investment in our work, renewing your membership after a few years' time, or becoming a new member, you will help us meet our goal of \$20,000. Even more importantly, you will help underwrite all we do to encourage communities to plan for a future Vermont that is vibrant, economically strong, and that retains its rural character. This takes time, and training. We help communities with both.

For instance, invest:

- ♦ \$100 to support the work of one volunteer to leverage our ability to serve communities
- ♦ \$300 to help cover the cost of one issue of our monthly e-newsletter
- ♦ \$1,000 to bring a training to a town select board or planning commission
- ♦ \$3,000 to fund a new Issue in our online Community Planning Toolbox
- ♦ \$10,000 to support a year of direct work in one community.

Our new Sustaining Membership makes it easier to increase your investment. Make a recurring, monthly pledge and spread your support over several months or a year. However you choose to give, you will be supporting Vermont and our communities.



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## GUEST VIEW



### *Growing Energy* By Dori Wolfe, Co-founder of groSolar

It's that time of year in New England – beautiful fall foliage, frosty mornings, vistas that take your breath away. It's also time to put the gardens to bed and hope we have enough food stored to last through the winter. Except I'm not that good of a farmer.

But there is one type of farming where I can excel - growing electrical energy at our home. I don't need to put it away for the winter. I don't need to mulch it. I don't need to build a barn to shelter it from the winter winds. With the generation of solar electricity, you plant once and enjoy the harvest day after day, year after year as

you watch the electric meter spin backwards. We have managed, over the years, to conserve enough and “plant” enough to generate all the electricity we use in our home.

The no-maintenance energy garden is an investment in the next quarter century of energy, with a great return both from price stability and environmental perspective. I sleep better knowing I am doing what I can to leave this planet a little greener for the next generation. And it's a great use of our land.

So if you care about keeping the Vermont landscape pristine and the maple trees beautiful,

take action, small or large, to reduce your use of fossil fuels and become a farmer of energy. Whether you start simply - buying food locally, making a home-cooked meal using minimal packaging, weatherizing your home – or whether you take the plunge into a renewable energy system or an electric vehicle, positive actions heal in more ways than one.

Farming energy is addictive and getting hooked on energy conservation and renewable energy production is the best. Join the quickly growing ranks of energy farmers. You won't regret it.

[www.smartgrowthvermont.com](http://www.smartgrowthvermont.com)



*Forging growth and conservation solutions for Vermont communities and rural countrysides.*